

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: OREP(JEFFORDS, JAMES M.)
SUBJECT: VISIT OF CONGRESSMAN JEFFORDS

REF: JAKARTA 16395

1. SUMMARY: DURING TWO-WEEK VISIT AS GUEST OF INDONESIAN CENTER STRATEGIC AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES, CONGRESSMAN JAMES JEFFORDS OF VERMONT HAD UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY SENSE CURRENT PREOCCUPATIONS INDONESIAN LEADERSHIP. THESE PREOCCUPATIONS CENTERED MAINLY ON ATTITUDE OF NEW U.S. ADMINISTRATION, THREAT FROM VIETNAM, UNCERTAINTIES IN THAILAND, HUMAN RIGHTS AND ENERGY ALTERNATIVES. END SUMMARY.

2. DURING TWO-WEEK VISIT JEFFORDS (REPUBLICAN-VERMONT) HAD OPPORTUNITY FOR EXTENSIVE MEETINGS WITH PRESIDENT SUHARTO, MILITARY LEADERSHIP AND ECONOMIC MINISTERS. HE ALSO VISITED PROVINCES OUTSIDE JAKARTA AND HAD FURTHER OPPORTUNITIES DISCUSSIONS WITH PROVINCIAL AUTHROTIES. SUCH DISCUSSIONS GAVE HIM SENSE OF CURRENT INDONESIAN PREOCCUPATIONS.

3. PRESIDENT AND MILITARY LEADERSHIP PARTICULARLY EXPRESSED
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FAMILIAR CONCERN OVER DEGREE OF U.S. INTERESTS IN INDONESIA. THIS IS RECURRING THEME AMONG INDONESIANS BASED TO CONSIDERABLE EXTENT ON RELATIVE LEVEL OF MILITARY ASSISTANCE. LATEST EXPRESSION REFLECTS UNCERTAINTY OVER SIGNIFICANCE FOR INDONESIA OF PRESIDENT-ELECT'S EMPHASIS ON EAST-WEST RELATIONS, MIDDLE EAST AND PARTICULARLY CHINA AND VIETNAM.

IN HIS DISCUSSIONS CONGRESSMAN JEFFORDS SOUGHT TO EMPHASIZE THAT NECESSITY FOR U.S. ADMINISTRATION TO CONCENTRATE PUBLICLY ON CRISIS AREAS DID NOT MEAN ANY LESS CONCERN FOR OTHER SIGNIFICANT FIREDNDS.

4. CLOSELY RELATED ARE INDONESIAN CONCERNS OVER VAGUE THREAT FROM NORTH. PRESIDENT AND OTHERS SPOKE TO JEFFORDS ABOUT "SPRATLEY-TYPE PROBLEM" WHICH COULD ARISE OVER NATUNAS ISLAND. THIS APPEARED TO BE EXTRAPOLATION TO NATUNAS OF EXISTING CONTINENTAL SHELF DISPUTE BETWEEN VIETNAM AND INDONESIA. MATTER WAS APPARENTLY SERVED UP TO EMPHASIZE INDONESIA'S MILITARY WEAKNESS IN FACE OF STRONGER COMMUNIST NATIONS TO NORTH.

5. CLAR DIFFERENCES OF VIEW ON HOW TO DEAL WITH INDO-CHINESE STATES EMERGED IN JEFFORDS' CONVERSATIONS. FOREIGN MINISTER MALIK, AS USUAL, STRESSED NEED FOR INDONESIA TO IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH INDOCHINESE STATES. MILITARY LEADERSHIP VOICED CONCERN OVER INTENTIONS OF VIETNAM AND OVER POSSIBILITY OF CLOSER U.S. RELATIONS WITH VIETNAM.

6. BOTH MALIK AND MILITARY LEADERSHIP EXPRESSED CONCERN OVER SITUATION IN THAILAND. MALIK PARTICULARLY EXPRESSED VIEW THAT PRESENT THAI GOVERNMENT WAS "TAKING ALL THE WRONG STEPS" IN DEALING WITH STUDENTS AND OPPOSITION ELEMENTS. MALIK TOLD JEFFORDS THAT HE WAS MAKING HIS VIEWS KNOWN TO THAI GOVERNMENT.

7. JEFFORDS ARRIVED IN INDONESIA JUST AFTER RECENT ANNOUNCEMENT REGARDING RELEASE OF POLITICAL DETAINEES. LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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HE HAD AMPLE OPPORTUNITY DISCUSS HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE AND EXPRESS INTEREST OF U.S. CONGRESS. JEFFORDS EXPRESSED TO EMBASSY FEELING THAT INDONESIAN AUTHORITIES WERE SINCERE IN THEIR INTENTION TO RESOLVE PROBLEM OF DETAINEES. HE DID DETECT SOME DIFFERENCES OF VIEW WITHIN REGIME ON ISSUE. HE FELT IT WAS POSITIVE ASPECT, HOWEVER, THAT CONSIDERABLE FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION EXISTED WITHIN INDONESIAN HIERARCHY ON THIS AND OTHER SUBJECT. REGIME IS NOT MONOLITHIC MILITARY ORGANIZATION HE HAD EXPECTED.

8. DURING PUBLIC LECTURES JEFFORDS TALKED ABOUT NECESSITY OF DEVELOPING NEW SOURCES OF ENERGY AND PARTICULARLY SOLAR ENERGY. HE FOUND THIS THEME WELL RECEIVED AND WAS FURTHER IMPRESSED BY RECOGNITION AMONG PROMINENT INDONESIANS OF NEED FOR INDONESIA TO DEVELOP ALTERNATIVE ENERGY SOURCES. INDONESIANS HE SPOKE WITH SEEMED CLEARLY TO UNDERSTAND RELATIVE SHORT TERM AVAILABILITY OF OIL AND REQUIREMENT QUICKLY TO FIND ALTERNATIVES FOR FUTURE.

9. AT END OF HIS VISIT CONGRESSMAN VOICED INTENTION OF ENCOURAGING HIS COLLEAGUES TO VISIT INDONESIA FOR FIRST-HAND LOOK. HE STATED HE HAD CHANGED HIS MIND ON VARIOUS ASPECTS OF THIS NATION, SUCH AS ITS ALLEGED WEALTH AND FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION; THE FIRST BEING EXAGGERATED AND THE SECOND MUCH MORE OPEN THAN EXPECTED. AMERICANS, HE FELT, TENDED TOO OFTEN TO JUDGE BY U.S. OR WESTERN STANDARDS SITUATIONS EXISTING IN COMPLETELY DIFFERENT CULTURAL ENVIRONMENT.

10. FOREGOING NOT CLEARED WITH JEFFORDS PRIOR HIS DEPARTURE.

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